A Heart Prepared

Day One – Mary's life before the Angel's visit.

A single girl from a small town sounds like the main female character in a Hallmark Christmas movie. Mary was a single girl from the unremarkable town of Nazareth. Biblically, Nazareth is not mentioned before this point in history. From that unremarkable location, the greatest chapter in human history begins. Mary was betrothed to Joseph. As a betrothed woman, we can assume her father had given his permission for the marriage. Joseph is assumed to have paid the bride price to either Mary or her father. The bride price was introduced in Genesis and Exodus as a fundamental premarital requirement. This would prove that Joseph could provide for his intended wife and was serious about his intentions toward Mary.

Mary was raised by a mother who taught her the basic skills of caring for a husband, preparing meals, and managing the household chores expected of a wife-to-be. She would have been instructed in her faith, a vital aspect of Jewish life. Luke 1:28 tells us that Mary was favored by the Lord and that the Lord was with her. From an ordinary upbringing would spring a woman of enormous devotion and courage. This reminds me of Psalm 5:11-12 (ESV). But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever sing for joy, and spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may exult in you. For you bless the righteous, O Lord; you cover him with favor as with a shield. God chose Mary for His most important task, short of creation: caring for His Son early in His life. He would place His protection over her, just as He does over you and me. We love the Lord because He loved us first. We are blessed and can rejoice in His protection. When we, too, remember Mary's story, we can trust His plan for our lives and our loved ones'.

Leaning on Jesus
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